

for light and shade, innocent of anything that can relieve the wearied eye, or awaken a spark of interest in the mind. I mention this street because it is one of those in the design of which (if we are to have beauty in street architecture), from the cost and size of the houses, we have a right to expect some acknowledgment of the influence, and some obedience to the laws, of the beautiful. But it is the fault, in a greater or less degree, of many other streets, and arises from the predominance in point of influence, of men who consider the beautiful incompatible with the useful, and have no idea of the moral agency of art. On such a street, as far as all æsthetic qualities are concerned, those of London of the fourteenth century might have looked proudly down!

Men have hitherto been too prone to copy the foregone, to kneel at the shrines of their forefathers, afraid of striking out into new paths, however clearly pointed out by the finger-posts of nature and judgment. The projectors of Washington and the new cities imitated Babylon and other great capitals, instead of going to nature, a reference to which must at any time have a regenerating influence upon the art, renew its exhausted resources, and remove the corruptions to which it is liable from the fetters of prescription, the passing whim of fashion, and other destructive influences.

This beauty I am aware should be subordinate to constructive requirements, and to the dictates of utility, and should in a great measure arise out of them; but it does not entirely so arise,—when these have performed their part, there is something still left in the way of decoration, which must be done under the guidance of judgment and enlightened taste.

I have hitherto considered the picturesque more as to the arrangement and diversity of houses than as regards their individual forms, but the latter is an essential consideration; and there was perhaps never a time when the architect was more thickly surrounded by elements yielding hints and suggestions for originating the picturesque than at present; and though it is independent of styles, yet, for our present ideas of it, we are, I consider, greatly indebted to the rise, development, and fall of the latter.

The Romans, infinitely inferior to the Greeks in purity of style, were superior to them in the pictorial: while less severe in taste and correct in expression, Rome exhibited more variety and richness, and produced greater magnificence than Athens had known. That this was the case her relics attest: the still glorious ruins of her temples, palaces, baths, and triumphal arches (spoils of time yet trophies of genius at which travellers still pause and wonder), bear witness to her architectural display in the days of Adrian. But beautiful and pure as was the Greek architecture, and rich as must have been that of the Romans, who contributed largely to the riches of the art by the introduction of the arch, and by that crowning glory of the art—the dome,—it is the moderns that have produced the grandest combinations, and most striking effects: the enthronement of the Pantheon on the temple of peace was a triumph reserved for Brunelleschi, Bramante, Michelangelo, and Wren;—who, with Palladio, Inigo Jones, and others, united the Greek and Roman elements to produce edifices, which, however far behind the ancient masters in purity of style, marked an advancement of the art in many qualities which nature suggests, and judgment sanctions.

The rise of Gothic architecture, remarkable for the variety of its forms, its profound scientific knowledge, and mechanical skill, introduced an entirely new feature into architecture in Europe, which gave an impulse to the study, and added to the resources of picturesque design. The inferiority of sandstone to marble in point of beauty must have given the new impetus to the struggle for decoration which it involved.

It was the genius of pointed design that first in Europe, leaving the horizontal principle of antiquity, introduced the vertical, which, according to the theory of some, was intended to direct the mind heavenward, and the whole style, in various particulars, to be a sort of hieroglyphical exponent of theological doctrines and ecclesiastical usages. Indeed, its

aspiring outlines, its bold projections, and deep recesses, its prominent and deeply-cut ornaments, render it highly capable of the most elaborate expression. And, though much of such particular expression, admitting it to exist, must necessarily refer to doctrines and systems which have passed away, and be so far powerless, yet all must acknowledge that sufficient remains of a purely abstract character, capable of stirring, in no slight degree, the chords of the heart and imagination.

The most perfect examples of pointed design were produced in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; some of the cathedrals of that period here and on the continent, in their decorations, seeming to vie with the infinite variety of nature herself; but the picturesque was perhaps never more perfectly embodied than in the ecclesiastical, monumental, and domestic Gothic of the later periods. Our old English, or Tudor, manor-houses and cottages, with their bay and oriel windows, turreted and pinnacled gables, niches, ornamental chimney-shafts and embattled porches, are the buildings, which, in their forms, beyond any others, harmonise with those of nature.

The introduction of Italian architecture into England gave a fresh impulse to our ideas of the picturesque, and produced in domestic buildings effects unseen before. The love of the picturesque, as embodied in Gothic buildings, prevented the native architect on its introduction from adopting it entire; the continuous entablatures and flat pediments of the classic architecture, as exhibited at Rome, compared with the bold and varied composition, and endless decoration, of the Gothic, must have had much of the effect of humble prose beside the lofty flights of the poet: perhaps association and other causes attached him to his native style: however that may be, by uniting the general principles of design and composition of the Tudor with the elements of the Palladian architecture, together with something of the quaint decoration of the German and Flemish schools, the style called the Elizabethan was produced.

For some time it was a mere parody on the classic; novelty and error went hand in hand, but something abstractly valuable to art, I consider, was gained; the study of picturesque beauty in connection with the antique orders was advanced, the wholesome effects of which were visible in the designs of Sir John Vanbrugh and others, who, endeavouring to call back to the architecture of Palladio something of the spirit of the native Gothic.

Whilst speaking approvingly of the Elizabethan architecture, I wish it to be understood that I do not refer to that mixture of Gothic and Italian detail that is seen in some old buildings,—these were merely transitional; what I understand by Elizabethan is the style that was presented when the transition was complete, and then no Gothic details existed in it; and, consisting of Italian details, implanted on Gothic design and composition only, it is worthy of attention. It was, in regard to the picturesque, a step in advance of the Italian,—which presented in general a straight outline, and suggestive of new combinations of the antique elements, more striking and beautiful than had yet been seen.

It was unfortunate for the art that the love of the picturesque, as engendered by this state of things, united to the most successful efforts to introduce it into the architecture of the ancients, should have been condemned as faults, and have gained for the architects little else than abuse, both from their contemporaries and successors. Vanbrugh, who had an intense feeling for the picturesque, who displayed the most original and inventive genius, and the most consummate skill in composition, was derided and lampooned by the first critics and poets of the day, and regarded almost in the light of an impostor, because he would not reproduce Roman and Greek temples in this country, but attempted to weave into picturesque forms, adapted to native requirements, the elements of the classic, and infuse the most striking features of our own into the architecture of the ancients. His chief works, Blenheim and Castle Howard, though not without faults, sufficiently attest his possession of the qualities which I here attribute to him. There are others who suffered martyrdom in their reputations to their

love for the truth in architecture, convinced that whatever the style of a building, whatever the character of its details, the composition may be picturesque.

I am aware that numberless whimsicalities and absurdities have been perpetrated in the name of the picturesque, but maintain, notwithstanding, that the picturesque is not, as has been supposed by many, inimical to purity of style, and that it can be obtained in the antique styles without violating their essential laws. The Greek architecture was for a different purpose to ours,—one which called for simplicity and solemnity. The source of the grand style of Greece was religion. Had they applied their architecture to domestic and other purposes, they would doubtless have engrafted new features thereon, and have drawn upon other principles. St. George's Hall, of this town, though pure Greek in style, and a new erection, is not unpicturesque. Many architects, celebrated in their day, in order to produce picturesque forms and combinations, perverted principle: they sacrificed propriety to the pictorial, but the pictorial demanded no such sacrifice. The picturesque is of no style, but it may be obtained in any. It reigned in Greece and Rome, and may be found in India, and Egypt, and China, at the present day; and though the hand of time may be useful in producing its most affecting associations, it may be had in the newest building, where outline is attended to,—where the laws of natural beauty are consulted.

Many of the old towns of the continent, and some nearer home—in Wales, for instance—strangers to the spirit of improvement that has elsewhere been busy in the land, though certainly not models for imitation in this improved age, could not be looked upon by the architect of taste without suggesting to his mind valuable hints for originating the picturesque in houses and streets. The streets of London, so far back as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as exhibited in old prints, with their pointed gables and overhanging stories, though affording no lesson in constructive science, are instinct with beauty; many of them develop principles, and yield striking hints as regards relief, and are highly suggestive of the conditions on which beauty may be obtained.

Time is certainly an agent in producing the picturesque: however injurious in other respects to works of art, he increases their pictorial beauty. To his hand the outlines of a building yield their stiffness: he varies its tones of colour, melting them as it were into more perfect keeping with the local scenery, and assimilating the whole to the condition of creation around. A building grows into harmony with nature by the effect of climate; it becomes adopted as it were by the *genius loci*, and they are united under the influence of the same causes; and when originally constructed in forms that harmonise with the works of God around, they remind the spectator, to quote the language of Wordsworth, "of a production of nature, and appear to have grown rather than to have been erected; and, when clothed in part with a vegetable garb, appear to be received into the bosom of the living principle of things, as it acts and exists among the woods and fields."

The older towns and cities, therefore, assume more of the picturesque. A town erected at a variety of periods, and in which we behold the work of centuries, presents a proportionately greater variety in style, hue, and shape,—and most towns have in this particular the advantage of the one in which our lot is cast.

I have said that picturesque beauty of design is independent of style. In this I might be borne out by the beauty of most Mahomedan cities, which present, with their array of mosques and minarets (notwithstanding the inferiority of the architecture in the higher principles), an entire result superior to what we see in many of their European competitors. Fancy and feeling, it is true, have been more consulted than judgment, but they have produced a wonderful effect, and are very suggestive to us.

It would be improper, in a treatise of this nature, to omit all mention of sculpture, which ranks high as an element of the picturesque in architecture. Statues were a crowning magnificence introduced on the apex of the temple pediments, as if the genius of the art, or the